

# Pertussis: Disease Villain!

*[Announcer] This program is brought to you by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*

[Kaya] Hi kids! Welcome to CDC Kidtastics Radio! I'm Kaya Kidtastic. Today, we're talking about pertussis, or whooping cough.

[Caydan] Pertussis is a disease that leaves its victims gasping for air.

[Karmen] At first, it might seem like a common cold—runny nose and cough. That's stage one, when pertussis is just warming up. After a week or two, its victims can have extreme coughing spells. People can cough so hard and long that they throw up or turn blue because they can't breathe.

[Chris] Victims of pertussis may make a big gasping "whoop" sound when they suck in air after a coughing fit. Pertussis is a bully, affecting young children and babies the most. It's no joke; about half of babies who get it wind up in the hospital.

[Kaya] Pertussis is highly contagious; that means it's easy to catch. If you have pertussis, everyone in your house can get it if they haven't been vaccinated.

[Caydan] Kids need the vaccine when they're little, but teenagers and adults need a booster shot.

[Karmen] Besides getting vaccinated, there are other things we can do to help improve our chances of not getting pertussis.

[Chris] Right, Karmen! Wash your hands often with soap and water, cover coughs and sneezes with your arm, and don't share cups and silverware.

[Kaya] Thanks for listening to CDC Kidtastics Radio. We'll talk to you again soon. Until then... be a safer, healthier kid!!

*[Announcer] For more health information, go to [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.*